



The Old Ironsides Report

21 June 2003

C Co., 1-37 Armor remembers fallen comrade

By Sgt. Mark Rickert, 372nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment.

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- Soldiers with the 1st Battalion, 37th Armored Regiment, honored a fallen comrade, PFC Shawn D. Pahnke, during a memorial ceremony June 20.

Pahnke died June 16, 2003 while on patrol in Baghdad. He was born Nov. 2, 1977, and grew up in Merrville, Indiana. His Army career began at Fort Knox, Ky., October 2002. During training, his instructors cited his discipline and motivation and promoted him to PV2.

Pahnke was assigned to 1st Platoon, C Company, March 26, 2003. He began to fulfill his lifelong dream to be a tanker as a loader on a M1 tank.

"(Private) Pahnke's memory will live forever in each of us here," said Lt. Col. Gary Bishop, 1-37 commander. "His death will not go in vain. We will not quit until our service here is complete."

"Pahnke was my best friend," said 1st Platoon member PV2 Curtis B. Cameron.

"He was so ecstatic when he talked about his son," Cameron continued. "He was looking forward to going home. Nothing brought more joy to Pahnke than his family."

Pahnke was optimistic about life and looked at every day in Iraq as a good day because he was one day closer to home, Cameron said.

"There was nothing you could do to bring him down," said Curtis. "He looked at tasks to do as things that would shorten his time here."

Chaplain (Capt.) Patrick Stepanek said the tankers in Pahnke's platoon are devastated by their loss. Because tanker platoons are small and rely on each other for survival, the soldiers bond quickly and friendships are firmly rooted.

"Pahnke's platoon is very tight with each other," the battalion chaplain said. "Tanker platoons typically are close because the other guys in the tank have to rely on each other to succeed. So, it's a very trust-oriented unit. You get close quick. There's really very little distinction between ranks out there."

"This gives us a sense of anger and insecurity,"



Soldiers from C Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armor remember their fallen comrade PFC Shawn D. Pahnke during a memorial ceremony June 20. Photo by Sgt. Mark Rickert, 372nd MPAD.

Stepanek said during the closing prayer. "This is our first fatality. It didn't happen to another unit or somebody else. This soldier was one of our own."

The ceremony ended with a roll call, in which Pahnke's name was called three times without answer. As the bugler performed taps, identification tags were hung on the fallen soldier's rifle.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, members of the unit passed by the symbolic display to give their final respects and salutes to their fallen comrade.

NEWS

Powell Calls Hamas 'Enemy of Peace'

Colin Powell said Friday the Palestinian Authority must strip the group of its terror network and negotiating a truce - as the Palestinian prime minister has been doing - is not sufficient. As Powell addressed a news conference with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, an Israeli motorist was killed and three people were wounded in a Palestinian shooting attack in the West Bank. Since a Mideast peace summit two weeks ago, 27 Israelis and 40 Palestinians have been killed.

Army Trial Recommended in Grenade Attack

FORT KNOX, Ky. (AP) - An investigating officer Friday recommended the court-martial of a soldier charged in the deadly grenade attack on sleeping 101st Airborne comrades in Kuwait. Evidence shows Sgt. Hasan Akbar had ample time to acquire the grenades used in the attack and that Akbar's rifle killed one of the two officers who died, said Col. Patrick Reinert at an Article 32 hearing.

Senate Votes to Allow Drugs From Canada

WASHINGTON (AP) - The Senate voted Friday to allow U.S. pharmacists to buy prescription drugs in Canada, where the same medicines sell for less, and resell them here, another attempt to drive down the rising cost of drugs. The 62-28 vote attached the measure to the pending Medicare prescription drug bill moving through Congress, where approval in the House and Senate was expected by the end of next week.

Crews Fight Devastating Ariz. Wildfire

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) - Firefighters fanned out Friday morning in a devastated mountaintop vacation hamlet to protect structures that so far have escaped a raging wildfire that destroyed up to 250 homes. Officials were pessimistic that the weather would help.

Chaplain's thought for the day:

Let the gentle bush dig its root deep and spread upward to split one boulder.

----Carl Sandburg

There is a fable about the sun and wind having a contest to see who can get the old man to take his coat off first. The wind blows fiercely, but the old man just pulls his coat tighter around him. Finally, the wind gives up and the sun comes out. The sun shines a steady warm light down on the old man, who soon takes his coat off.

When we find ourselves most frustrated, it is often because we are trying to force certain things to happen. Our own patient and steady desire to grow, fed by the love and kindness of others, will not be stopped by anything or anyone. Our own gentleness is a powerful force in our lives. It is like the gentle bush that grows through the granite.

BUSINESS

Dow Up 64, Nasdaq Rises 2

NEW YORK (AP) - Wall Street bounced back from a two-day sell-off Friday, with stocks rising higher amid investors' strengthening confidence in the economy and their anticipation of another interest rate cut coming next week. The advance extended the buying spree that has boosted Wall Street for more than three months.

Harry Potter Fans Count the Minutes

NEW YORK (AP) - The countdown is on for anxious Harry Potter fans, although a few have already gotten really lucky, stumbling into stores jumping the gun on the latest installment. One London fan says she's getting really impatient waiting for the official release of the 870-page heavyweight, by far the longest in the series.

SPORTS

Lennox Lewis Heaviest Ever for Title Fight

By Steve Keating

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - Lennox Lewis tipped the scales for his world heavyweight title defense against Ukrainian Vitali Klitschko at a beefy 256 1/2 pounds on Thursday, the heaviest the Briton has ever weighed for a fight.

Weighing seven and a half pounds more than he did when he last climbed into the ring a year ago to take on Mike Tyson, a surprised gasp swept through a modest crowd at the weigh-in conducted in front of the Staples Center.

"Whatever he weighs, he looks good and I'm satisfied," trainer Emanuel Steward told Reuters, shrugging off any suggestion that 37-year-old Lewis (40-2-1, 31 KOs) was not fit or had taken the fight lightly.

"He's been training and training good, he's a big guy and he looks good. He's in great shape and sparring more than he ever has and that's what he weighs, I'm happy about it."

Klitschko (32-1, 31 KOs) also added some weight for Saturday's WBC and IBO bout, tipping the scales at 248 pounds. Promoters said that made it the heaviest heavyweight title fight in history at a combined 504 1/2 pounds.

The 6-foot-7 Klitschko, a late replacement for Kirk Johnson after the Canadian was injured in training, has fought at 249 pounds but was down to 244 and 246 for his last two fights.

TODAY'S WEATHER

High: 106F

Low: 78F

